



YOUTH ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM & BEYOND: **PHY. ED**

-ALL AGES/GRADES-

BALLOON FRANTIC:

(Ice breaker, warm-up activity, or deinhibitizer)

Objective: The objective is to use an interactive balloon game to teach students the value of goals and how negative influences can impact those goals.

Materials: You will need one or more medium to large balloons per student representing “goals” and “negative influences”, an open space such as a corner of the classroom or gym, and a group of four or more people.



Directions: Have the group form a circle with one person in the middle. Give each person a balloon to hold with a distinct color for the person in the middle. You will instruct the person in the middle that his/her balloon represents a “goal” in life. The balloons given to the people in the circle will represent “negative influences.” Have the group state out loud what their balloons represent (goals could be: good grades, making the basketball team, getting into the college of their choice, etc.; negative influences could be: peer pressure, rumors, a fight with a friend, or alcohol/drugs). Once the directions are understood by all, have everyone throw their balloon in the air. The person in the middle will attempt to keep his/her balloon afloat while the circle of people around him/her will try to distract or hit their balloon in a way of causing the person in the middle to lose focus of their balloon/”goal”. The game ends when the person’s balloon in the middle hits the ground.

Want to see **Balloon Frantic** in ACTION? Click  to instantly view the video tutorial

-OR-

Checkout **North Dakota Substance Abuse Prevention’s** Teacher Tube® video shelf

<http://teachertube.com/viewProfile.php?user=Nds Substance Abuse Prev>

Debrief/Discussion: When the game ends, have the group sit in a circle with the balloons in the middle (this will prevent the group from playing with the balloons while you are facilitating the debriefing). Either as a whole group or neighbor share/discuss individual goals and what is needed to achieve them. Have the group repeat what their balloons represented. Ask the person in the middle question like: “How difficult was it to keep your balloon in the air. How did the influences around you keep you from reaching your “goal”? Does this happen in our lives?” Ask the group questions like, “How did it make you feel to see someone lose their “goal”? Have you ever been a negative influence in someone’s life?” When the group has completed the debriefing, you can ask the next person to step into the middle and start the game again.

GROUP KNOT:

(Problem Solving, Team Building, Communicating, Cooperation, Deinhbitizer)

Objective: The participants will use small pieces of nylon rope to tie a knot and get untangled in order to teach social skills on how to communicate, deal with problems, and use teamwork.

Materials: You will need a 30-36 inch long piece of nylon rope ($\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick) for each individual participating in this activity.

Safety Considerations: Requires climbing or bending that may be difficult for those with prior injuries or physical disabilities.



Directions: Give each person in the group a “buddy rope” and have them stand in a circle. While standing in a circle, have the group hold one end of their “buddy rope” in their right hand. Have someone across from them in the circle grab the other end of someone else’s rope, but make sure the same two people are not holding each other’s ropes. Encourage the group to create as big of a knot as they can in 30-60 seconds, making sure that no one lets go during the process. When the time runs out, the group must untangle themselves without letting go of the rope in either hand. If your group is too large (10+), you can divide them into two groups. Have each group make their own knot as described above. When the time is up and the knots are made, have each group carefully place their knots on the ground making sure that the ends are visible for the other group to grab. Have the two groups switch knots so that they have to untangle the opposite group’s knot.

Debrief/Discussion: How many times have you been faced with a problem and was not sure how to solve it? How often is the problem much easier to fix than what you first thought? When you have two groups ask, “How many times have entered into someone else’s mess or problem and had to find a way to fix or solve it?” What types of “life lines” have you used to help solve the problem?

MINE FIELD:

(Trusting Others, Communication, Cooperation, Team Building, Problem Solving)

Objective: This is a quick activity which can teach communication skills and trust by guiding a blindfolded partner across a designated area without stepping on an object or “mine.” .

Materials: You can use objects around the classroom for “mines” such as small books, pieces of crumpled paper, critter toys, and Koosh®/fleece balls. If you do not have items that you can use for “mines,” you can have the students guide each other past a few chairs, desks, or tables. You will also need a blindfold for the person/s being guided through the designated area.



Safety Considerations: Person with vision is responsible for the safety of the person who is blindfolded.

Directions: Set up your boundary area and spread out the objects you designate as “mines” in a random order. Break the group up into teams of two. One person will be blindfolded and the other will guide them. The person with their vision must direct the blindfolded person across the boundary area without stepping on a “mine”. Have them focus on using clear directions to get their partner across the area safely. Once the person navigates safely across the designated area, have the two switch roles and repeat the process.

Debrief/Discussion: The “mines” could represent negative influences in a person’s life such as bad decisions, rumors, or alcohol and other drugs. The person doing the guiding could represent a parent/guardian or friend who is trying to keep them on a good path in life. Start the debrief by having each person state two things the other person did well. When they have all had a chance to express themselves, ask questions like, “What is difficult about being the blindfolded person? What did you like/dislike about being in each position? Who in your life can you trust to help guide you to good choices? “

Variation: Can be made more difficult by having two people with vision directing a blindfolded person across the area. One will give clear positive directions and the other is given the task of providing bad directions as to confuse or misdirect the blindfolded individual. Ask questions in the debrief like, “How often in life do we get bad advice and are left to decide which way to go? How do you decide who is giving bad directions and who is giving good directions?”

*RED RIBBON FLASH MOB:

Coordinate a Red Ribbon Week “Flash Mob” in your community! Design a performance with a positive message about being alcohol and drug-free! For example, have students rewrite the lyrics to a popular song and create a catchy tagline like “Imma Be Drug-Free (The Black-Eyed Peas hit song “Imma Be” [squeaky clean version](http://www.wikihow.com/Organize-a-Flash-Mob) of course!). Have students perform in the community, at a sporting event or school assembly. Learn how to organize a Flash Mob <http://www.wikihow.com/Organize-a-Flash-Mob>. Don’t forget to have someone video the performance and send a copy to your local news station, post on your Web site and send it to use to feature it on our YouTube channel!

*cross-curriculum ☐